FREE SOCIETY

ENTERED AT SAN FRANCISCO POSTOFFICE AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER.

An Exponent of Anarchist-Communism: Holding that Equality of Opportunity alone Constitutes Liberty; that in the Absence of Monopoly Price and Competition Cannot Exist, and that Communism is an Inevitable Consequence.

VOL. VI. NO. 45 SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1900. WHOLE NO. 285.

A DIFFERENCE.

When the cobbler wants clothes,
And the tailor wants boots,
They exchange work for work,
And both parties it suits.
When the landlord wants clothes
He just holds out his hand,
And exchanges—permission
To live on the land!

—Justice.

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THE GALVESTON TRAGEDY.

The terrible floods, which have destroyed thousands of lives, and laid the beautiful city of Galveston in ruins, must have done more than tons of Free Thought literature to convince a multitude of people that their faith in a beneficent, all-loving God has been wretchedly misplaced. It would be a fiend, not a father, whose omnipotent hand could deal out such cruel agonies to a host of helpless sufferers. If there were such a God, he must needs be omnipotent indeed, not to be shaken from his throne by the curses of the men and women whom he has created, deluded, and destroyed.

Many thousands of homes, all over the country, are saddened by the tidings from the doomed city. Those of us who have friends there, living or dead, must wait and wait, until patience grows into despair. The calamity is one against which human forethought was unable to provide. No man, or body of men, can be held accountable for the disaster which has brought ruin into so many lives. It is not so much from the calamity itself, as from its effect on men and women, that the lesson is to be drawn.

Two sides of human nature always come to light in times like this, when the artificial is stripped away, and the elemental passions have full control. On the one hand, is all the latent viciousness, engendered by ages of false training and baneful institutions, and customarily varnished over with the thin veneer of our sham civilization. On the other hand, we see the real manhood and womanhood, the human sympathy and sense of human solidarity, repressed and stifled by the poisonous spirit of commercialism, breaking all barriers under the solemn appeal of a gigantic spectacle of human need. The one of these manifestations contains the ground of our complaint against the present social system; the other contains the ground of our hope for better things.

In the very midst of death and destruction, the beast in many men seemed unchained. The pillage of the dead for private gain presented a hideous and sickening picture. A typical case is that of a man in whose pocket was found a baby's finger, which he had cut from the corpse for the sake of a paltry ring. Disgusting as such deeds are, what else could be expected? In a regime which exalts private property as the main object of existence, why should not the dead yield up their treasures to the living, who alone have need of them? Why should we, whose whole civilization is based on the lust for gold, shudder at the ghoul who plunders the dead, to satisfy his greed? It is the law of commercialism that the weak shall give way to the strong, the simple to the clever, the straightforward to the crafty. With such principles instilled into them from childhood, taught to regard their fellow-men as rivals and enemies, what marvel that in such hours of great convulsions, when it is no longer necessary to keep up appearances, men throw the mask aside? The unchained tiger is let loose; and who shall expect him to bear himself otherwise than as the beast society has made of him?

If we would see different results, we must provide a social environment for men, which will develop other qualities in them. Otherwise, whether in the midst of fearful convulsions of nature, or in the hour of revolution, we may always expect to witness scenes of horror like these.

But there is another side to the picture, far more bright and pleasing to contemplate. Such appalling catastrophes have in them this of good, that they reawaken in myriads of men and women the slumbering spirit of brotherhood. Even commercialism has not produced a race of entire fiends. Hardened and calloused by custom to the cruelties of competitive warfare, and to the poverty and wretchedness that are always around us, we have come to look on these things as natural and inevitable, failing to recognize their close dependence on abnormal social conditions. It takes a sudden convulsion to bring us to our senses, and to make us realize the real kinship between human beings. The countless acts of heroism will never be reported. There was none, in such an hour, to observe and comment. What is plainly visible, is the spontaneous sympathy which is now manifesting itself, in practical manner, all over the land. Humanity is not dead yet, when the rigid dictates of commercial selfishness give way everywhere to an earnest desire to relieve suffering fellow-beings. It is a rift in the clouds, through which the clear sky above them can be seen. Our hope is to disperse these clouds altogether.

True, the lesson is not fully learned. The iron wheels of sordid business methods will still roll on. The very men who, not from hypocrisy, but in sincere desire to be of service, have contributed liberally to the relief of the sufferers, will turn back to their daily routine of warring against their competitors, and of pressing the lives out of their wage-slaves. But they have had a taste of something better; and in their hearts they know that it brings more satisfaction.

Courage, comrades! Human nature is not utterly corrupted. It is not instinct, but commercial greed, which furnishes the motive for the oppression of man by man. Strip away that motive; and we shall have a humanity worthy of our love. The impulsive expression in such crises as the present exhibits the grand latent possibilities in men. Let us, with renewed energy and renewed confidence, bend to the task of winning for ourselves and our fellows a social state in which such impulses shall become habitual. In true freedom, is the key to the elimination of private greed, and the development of a race of brothers and sisters, working together for the good of all. JAMES F. MORTON, JR.

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SHARPS AND FLATS.

Poor China! With a population of only 400,000,000, her very existence is now menaced by the 4,000 German troops which Billy the Terrible has sent forth, with the awful injunction to smite and spare not, till no Chinaman shall dare to look at a German cross-eyed for a thousand years. Possibly the very next tidings that will scorch the ocean cables will startle the world with the awful message of China's doom, wrought in the sick'ning horror of her 400,000,000, butchered to make a German holiday. Even if this does not happen, another speech from Wilhelm the Awful will stand on end every pigtail in the Celestial Empire, and so frighten the countrymen of Confucius, that the mention of Germany will occasion universal nervous prostration in the Flowery Kingdom for the next thousand years. Let China crawl in her hole; and draw the hole in after her.

What an awful thing it would be, if Talmage, the man of God and Gall, should get jerked hence to his mansion in the sky, by some unaccountable dispensation of Providence! For years, this mouth-piece of Omnipotence has had a private wire to the "Great White Throne," a kind of back-stairs communication with Deity, and his utterances have been, so to speak, by the card. He has kept his gaping auditors thoroughly posted regarding the divine movements, God's intentions, private opinions, and all other matters which Jehovah forgot to have published in the Bible. Since Daniel, the original lion-tamer, and the olden time when Jehovah played "now-you-see-it-and-now-you-don't-see-it" with the whale, and Adam took his tumble "over the garden wall," no other mortal has been on such intimate terms with heaven's monarch, or possessed the Talmagian ability to anticipate and foretell Jehovah's policies, political and otherwise. Great, therefore, is Talmage, the stuffed prophet of orthodoxy, the toady of princes, and hater of common things—especially the common people.

* * *

"There is no room for Anarchists in this country of liberty under the law," shrieks the Nashville American. La, now, do tell. When does the next train leave, I wonder? Liberty under the law, is it? I thank thee, Jew, for that word. Yes, liberty in America is under the law—quite right; and it is precisely because liberty is under the law's iron heel, crushed and lifeless in the shadow of the law's ruthless scepter, as represented by police club and militia bayonet, that Anarchists protest against this reign of law and authority, and seek to rescue stricken liberty from her prostrate position—"under the law." The soulless Hessians of plutocracy's bribed and bastard journalism occasionally stumble over the truth, and let it out in their scribbling tommyrot; but we "forgive them, for they know not what they do."

* * *

Religion is a good thing, but I prefer mine in the original package—four "x" brand, and without the revenue stamp. Some people carry a surplus stock of assorted religion, while others manage to stumble along through this low ground of sorrow, without any at all,—or scarcely any to speak of. I have noticed that piety and purity are not always synonymous, and that religion and rascality sometimes wear the same boots. I have been acquainted with good Christians who were not good men and women, and with good church members who were not good members of society. Once in a while, a minister that has been called of God is called by the sheriff, and gets promoted to the penitentiary, for some thoughtless lapse, like rape, seduction or a similar fault. I have seen the church make a man pious, without in the least effecting his yearning to finger other people's cash; and quite often a red-handed murderer is "washed in the blood of the lamb," after wallowing in the blood of the innocent and helpless, being promoted to a crown and harp by one jerk of the hangman's rope. Thus doth law aid the salvation of souls. Religion is a good thing—for those who get a comfortable salary for preaching it.

* * *

Bro. McKinley's "benevolent assimilation" has successfully assimilated the lives of a goodly number of American soldiers—but they havn't caught Mr. Aguinaldo yet, and the "rebellion" goes bravely on. "Who will haul down the American flag?" grandiloquently exclaims Mr. Hanna's president. It's dimes to ginger-cakes that the Filipinos will perform the job, before they quit; and every true American, who loves freedom and fair play, will rejoice to see them do it.

* * *

Comrade Morton penned a whole volume in that line: "Government is the cancer of society." And like all cancers, its removal will necessitate the surgeon's knife. The operation may be painful; but the sooner it is performed the better for the suffering humanity, upon whom the cancer feeds.

Silver Springs, Tenn. ROSS WINN.

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Anarchy.—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal; absolute individual liberty.—Century Dictionary

NOTES.

Our frequent references to the San Francisco Examiner are due solely to the fact that it is the only paper that comes into our sanctum every day. Any other daily in the country would afford quite as much ground for comment and criticism. Mr. Hearst's papers deserve neither the extravagant praise nor the violent abuse which they receive from different quarters. While they are exactly as dishonest as any others, in their pretence of a superabounding love for the people, they are no more a disgrace to modern journalism than any of their Pecksniffian contemporaries. Like all the rest, they are out for money, and will stoop to the basest means, when it becomes for their special interest to do so. In this, all our dailies are alike. Their superficial differences of appearance are due to the fact that they cater to different classes. Not one of them, however, can afford to be truly honest. Should it undertake the hazardous experiment, its doom would be sealed within a week.

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While I think that Comrade Byington has much the better of Comrade Addis in the matter of history, it is really of small importance. Proof of the existence of such a historical character as Jesus of Nazareth is by no means proof of the authenticity of the particular events recorded by his followers, whose statements, save as to the bare fact of his existence, are wholly uncorroborated. Nor has it any bearing on the question of the authenticity of the doctrines imputed to him by the gospel writers, of whom about the only thing certain is that they were *not* his contemporaries, and that their real names were *not* Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The historical characters of Zoroaster and Buddha are as well attested, and those of Confucius, Mahomet, and Joseph Smith much better; yet this fact is not a guarantee of the soundness of their teachings.

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All attacks I have made on the Church have been due to its assaults on liberty. I have dwelt but little on the soundness or unsoundness of its religious philosophy. If its general spirit were not hostile to social progress, I should let it alone altogether, so far as Free Society is concerned. Space is profitably occupied in our paper in pointing out the assailable features of any institution, which is inimical to human emancipation.

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The People's Press of Chicago knows a good thing when it sees it, and seizes a good thing when it knows it. In witness whereof, compare the two following quotations:

In one day, more than fifty Anarchists were arrested in Rome. It is next to certain that none of these knew anything of Bresci's purpose, and that many of them disapprove of deeds of violence. They are simply persecuted for their opinions. This is the sure way to make assassins out of peaceful men. The daily press says not a word in denunciation of outrages like this, but reserves its fiercest maledictions for the occasional victim who strikes back.—Free Society, Sept. 2.

The wholesale arrests of Anarchists in Rome, of whom it is safe to say that none of them knew aught of Bresci's intention, and that many, if not all of them, are opposed to acts of violence and deplore the deeds of assassins, is a sure way to manufacture assassins out of otherwise peaceable and harmless citizens. The daily press is mum in denunciation of these outrages perpetrated in the name of "law and order," but, let an occasional victim strike back, then—oh my! What a howl!—The People's Press, Sept. 8.

I venture to whisper the suggestion that plagiarism is not commonly recognized as the method best adapted to usher in the millennium.

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Comrade Borland has promised a reply to Mr. Hamilton, which will appear in due season. The delay has been due to a prolonged vacation, necessitated by illness. I preferred to have the answer come from Comrade Borland, since his was the article challenged by Mr. Hamilton, rather than to write, or solicit a refutation from some other comrade. At the same time, I do not consider Mr. Hamilton's position by any means unassailable.

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While the Italian government is applying the most fiendish ingenuity in the torture of Bresci, our Italian comrades are devoting their efforts to the purpose of helping his destitute wife and child. Whatever is thought of his deed, it is not they who should suffer for it. Contributions, small or large, may be sent to La Questione Sociale, Paterson, N. J., and will be gladly welcomed by our Italian comrades.

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We desire to issue No. 7 of the Free Society Library in December; but the expense of doing so will be considerable. Hence we must ask for advance subscriptions from all comrades who can afford to send money now. The book will be, beyond question, one of the most valuable ever published. It is to be a translation of Jean Grave's latest work, "Anarchy, Its Aims and Methods." The ground covered is entirely different from that dealt with in "Moribund Society." Several chapters are devoted to a thorough discussion of tactics, and an examination of different methods of propaganda. The subject of Socialism is dealt with in a vigorous manner. The book will be an exceedingly powerful weapon in the hands of any comrade. The retail price will be twenty-five cents. A few handsomely bound copies will be sold for seventy-five cents each. Please order at once, and thus facilitate the work.

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CURRENT NEWS.

Private Harry L. Johnson, Company B, Fifth Infantry, who boasts of having killed four men, is a prisoner at the California-street police station, charged with having stolen a field glass and a pair of eyeglasses during a fire in the home of Chuw Wo, 605 Jackson street, yesterday afternoon. Burglary is the charge.—San Francisco Examiner.

The government barracks in San Francisco afford an excellent opportunity to study the real character of the American soldier. Such deeds of "heroism" as that signalized above are of almost daily occurence.

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Williamsport, Pa., Sept. 4.—Meyer Singer, manager of the Lycoming pants factory, employing 700 hands, has announced that the plant would close down Sept. 15 until after election, and if Bryan is elected will not resume operations, not caring to run the risk of doing business under his administration.—Press Dispatch.

This exhibits the characteristic heartlessness of the average capitalist. He knows that his pretended "risk" is all humbug, but is willing to starve 700 workingmen, in order to coerce them into voting as he wishes. It is a beautiful commercial system, in which such wretches have the upper hand. Much good the pretended freedom of the ballot does the laboring man, when he dares not use it contrary to his master's will!

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All the bunco men who were held in the city prison tanks during the festival were released yesterday, excepting Thomas Wallace. Captain Seymour says that when Wallace was arrested, he had his night key in his pocket, and was looking at the Phelan building, as though he wished he owned it. He is held on suspicion.—San Francisco Examiner.

Visitors to San Francisco are respectfully warned not to look at any building as if they wished they owned it; otherwise they are apt to be arrested in this free city. Russia could not show worse tyranny.

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In Bar Harbor, Maine, a famous fashionable resort, a fleet of English warships was recently welcomed with great effusiveness. A single man who had displayed a Boer flag on his own premises, was promptly taught that Americans have no rights in their own country, which sycophantic Anglomaniacs are bound to respect. His flag was forcibly torn down by one of the Selectmen, accompanied by other "leading citizens," amid the cheers of the mob. Its presence might have given offence to the British ruffians, who have of course the right to dictate to Americans what opinions they shall hold or profess. It is agreeable to read that the British admiral took the incident "with the utmost good nature." Such unspeakable toadyism ought to content him.

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Police Judge Cabaniss of San Francisco is among those who hold that a married woman is merely a piece of property, with no right to speak to any man but her owner. The other day, this perverter of equity released a dastardly brute who had shot a man, whom he found in conversation with his wife. The judge declared that "a man was justified under any such circumstances in shooting to kill." If the marriage system is sound, the judicial champion of marital slavery is right. But how contemptible both he and it appear, in the light of the conception that woman is a human being, with the rights of such.

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Comrade Kleinman, who was arrested in Chicago for distributing our leaflet, "Another Blow to Royalty," was discharged, but at once rearrested on a different warrant. From the extended reports in Chicago papers, it is evident that this act of police tyranny has been a capital means of propaganda. Our young comrade held his own splendidly in court, and made a strong argument. The Chicago persecutions are doing our movement good.

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The death of Nietzsche removes from the world one of the most stalwart and striking thinkers of the century. His effect on modern thought is none the less pronounced, in that it has not always been attributed to its real source.

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The work of Christian civilization continues to progress in China, as the following news item indicates:

The transport Hancock, Captain Struve, arrived yesterday from Taku, by way of Nagasaki. She brought home a number of refugee missionaries, and several army and navy officers. The transport passengers bring full confirmation of the stories of brutality toward Chinese women and children, at the hands of the Russian soldiers. Some of the Hancock's officers were in Tien-Tsin; and they say that the savagery of the czar's fighters toward the defenceless non-combatants was everywhere spoken of with horror. Women were assaulted and then put to death in the most shocking manner, their bodies being left on the road or in their homes, as they fell. The barbarities of the Russians exceed in execution those which were first laid at the door of the Chinese Boxers.

The Anglo-Saxon contingent does not intend, however, to be too far behind in the good work. Dorward's division recently gave over an entirely pacified city to the hoodlum soldiery, to be thoroughly looted, and then burned. Imagine the horrors of Galveston deliberately created by man, instead of being the result of a natural catastrophe; and you can form some conception of the cold-blooded fiendishness of Christian Englishmen, who exult in laying desolate the homes of thousands of women and children. The Chinese will be obdurate indeed, if they can resist such touching practical exemplifications of the spirit of Christianity.

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The anthracite coal miners of western Pennsylvania have at last determined to strike for living wages. The coal miners are the worst paid and most cruelly treated of all laborers. Their contest is against the foulest form of commercial greed; and their success is to be earnestly hoped for. The characteristic heartlessness of politicians is seen in the irritation of a Republican national committee-man, who censured the mine-owners for not managing to pacify their workers until after election. If only his party could win, he cared nothing for what might become of the workingman. The papers reported this scoundrelly utterance, without a word of adverse comment; and hundreds of thousands of workingmen will march up to the polls and vote into power men to whom they are simply serviceable tools.

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DISCORDS.

C. F. S.—Who invites you to write me letters ("Enclosing stamps") or not, in reply to my articles. Do you really think that I am under any obligation to bother with your kind of cattle?—Ambrose Bierce in the San Francisco Examiner.

This should be widely circulated as a sample of journalistic courtesy. The infallibility of Ambrose Bierce, who never speaks of workingmen but with an insult or a sneer, must not be disputed by any "cattle," as he suavely designates the common people. I trust that all will take warning not to address any communications to this journalistic deity, under the mistaken apprehension that he is in any sense a gentleman.

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Rev. Thomas C. Easton is after "Sappho" and every other play and work of literature that lifts the veil from the actual conditions of life. In a succession of hysterical ejaculations, he proceeds to give an unconscious revelation of the unmitigated filthiness of his own mind, as well as his fear that unless an absolute and tyrannical censorship of lit-

erature and the stage be exercised, the people will evolve out of the state of anserine ignorance which now enables them to tolerate him and his foul-mouthed slanders of his betters.

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A life of patient industry is sure to be blessed with a competence, if it is not crowned with an abundant remuneration. The great majority of our leading men of wealth are indebted for their fortunes to their untiring industry. Take an active personal, conscientious interest in the business of your employer. Be as much concerned about its prosperity as if it were your own.

Foster habits of economy and self-denial. . . .

While honestly striving to better your condition, be content with your station in life.—Cardinal Gibbons in San Francisco Examiner.

This is good advice from a—Gibbons. The worst of the parasites are always ready to counsel the workers. In one respect, however, the cardinal practises what he preaches. He is unquestionably content with his own station in life. So might be millions of the proletarians whom he helps to exploit, if they were permitted to change places with him. The first paragraph is recommended to the robbed and starving coal miners. If it were taken literally, there would be no strikes—and no social progress. It is good advice for willing slaves, but not for self-respecting men. The second sentence is an inexcusable falsehood. Cardinal Gibbons knows as well as anybody that "the great majority of our leading men of wealth are indebted for their fortunes" to the monopolization of natural resources, and the exploitation of labor. But it would not do for a cardinal to violate Church traditions, by telling the truth, and espousing the cause of the people.

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To the man in the tree it looks very much as if the death rate in the Philippines is very low. . . . And it is unfortunately true that more of our soldier boys have died victims of their own physical excesses than have fallen before the enemy or perished from tropical fevers.—Living Issues.

This lively periodical is so one-sided in its A. P. A. spirit, that it can see no evil without a priest in it, and no good in anything which receives the support of a single Roman Catholic. While there is no doubt that the Catholic Church is a deadly enemy to all intellectual and social progress, it is nevertheless true that there are a few scoundrels in the world who are not priests, and a few other evils besides Roman Catholicism. Because a few Irishmen support Bryan in opposition to the British imperialism of the maladministration, Living Issues ignores all the real principles involved, and falls savagely foul of the Anti-Imperialist movement. Even from its own standpoint, it is grossly inconsistent. Does Living Issues forget the outrages of the friars in the Philippine Islands, as being foremost among the causes that led to the insurrection? Has it forgotten that when peace proposals were under consideration, the McKinley government refused to take the hands of the friars from the throats of the people, even though the Filipinos were ready to lay down their arms in return for protection from their oppressors? Has he forgotten the name of Archbishop Chappelle, McKinley's special darling, and the bitterest enemy of liberty? Have the instructions by the Manila Jesuits so soon slipped its memory? Is it so bound to a slavish adulation of everything with a British label, that all other considerations vanish into thin air?

The death-rate in the Philippine Islands is far from the leading argument against imperialistic outrage. The hired murderers who go there to slaughter liberty-loving men, in obedience to the trust magnates and empire-plotters, deserve no sympathy when they meet the fate due to all bravos and invaders. The last sentence is a choice admission of the real character of the drunken and syphilitic wretches who constitute the bulk of the American soldiery. They reap the natural result of their own insatiable debauchery.

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The San Francisco Examiner condemns Teddy Roosevelt for preventing the Sunday sale of beer in New York City, and for allowing Mrs. Place to be executed. Both acts, however, from an authoritarian standpoint, are highly praiseworthy. Teddy simply enforced the law, as he had sworn to do, in assuming office. The Examiner cannot justly censure him, without coming over to the Anarchist position. Admit the slightest margin in the selection of what laws shall be enforced; and down goes the whole governmental fabric. Besides, in the latter case, the Examiner may make a sickly appeal to sentimentalism; but it cannot give a single argument against the execution of a woman, which will not equally apply to that of a man. But nobody expects a governmentalist to be logical or consistent.

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A REPLY.

A. A. Orcutt says, in yours of August 19: "If land be taxed to its full rental value, there can be nothing left to the producer above the living he now gets; the tax must be so rigid as to require that man shall labor to the extent of labor power, in order that land shall bring forth to its full capacity: or it is not taxed to its full rental value, and may be rented to somebody who will make a better use of it." This is an ingenious argument, and, I think new; but—the rental value would be what men would give in the market, for the use of it; not its "full capacity." Where men were free to employ themselves upon the boundless resources of nature, men would not be willing to pay all that unremitting toil could squeeze out of the land—they would pay only the value of that site to the customary labor over the value of other sites.

BOLTON HALL.

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HISTORIC EVIDENCES.

Comrade Addis declines to answer my questions, which I thought were pertinent, and instead calls on me for "proof of the historic character" of Jesus Christ. Well, I can answer him.

In the first place, we have a moderately detailed account of Jesus in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. (I omit John simply because its authenticity and reliability are under dispute; I myself consider it well established.) It is undisputed among scholars that these books, if the first is not itself an apostle's work, are at least compiled largely from documents written down during the lifetime of many who had personally known and followed Jesus; and that these documents were written either by these eye-witnesses themselves or by men who had heard much of it through quite direct channels. This does not prove the infallibility of all the gospel records; but it is what would commonly be accepted as complete proof of the existence of such a man, and of certain leading outlines of his life and character.

Secondly, it is agreed that First Corinthians and certain other epistles were written by one Paul, who at the time of Jesus' death was either a young man or a big boy; who soon after that time lived and studied in Jerusalem, one of the cities most prominently associated with Jesus' life; and who within another short space of time became closely associated with most of those who had been most intimate with Jesus. (All this has never been denied by any scholar of prominence except Bruno Bauer; and Bauer's little reputation is now nearly forgotten.) But these epistles, and especially First Corinthians, contain many references not only to the existence of Jesus Christ, but to noted events in his life. This is first-class historical material.

Third, Josephus is universally acknowledged to be the principal authority on the history of Palestine in those times. He was born in Palestine within ten years after Jesus' death, and grew up there. In a passage of unquestionable genuineness, he mentions James as a man of good reputation and "brother of Jesus who was called Christ."

Fourth, Jewish tradition, which, in its steady hostility to the claims of the Christians, can be traced back to an almost contemporary date, has no hint that Jesus is a fictitious personage. It includes other stories against the Christian history—such as the rather belated report cited by Comrade Morton, that he was the son of a Roman soldier; I don't believe Comrade Morton can have compared the respective attestations of that story and of the other that he was the son of Joseph—but no hint of a suspicion that Jesus never lived.

Fifth, Tacitus, who must at least have been twenty-five when he was quaestor at Rome, fifteen years after the persecution of Christians under Nero, has written the history of that persecution. He gives a very unfriendly account of Christ and Christianity, based on the stories told by their enemies in the time of that persecution, thirty-five years after the death of Jesus, when there must have been in Rome dozens, if not hundreds of Jews, who had been in Jerusalem on the day of Jesus' crucifixion. And during that persecution, it was a life-and-death matter to the Jews to prove that they had nothing to do with the Christians. And Tacitus asserts that Christ was a real man.

Now if these proofs do not satisfy Comrade Addis, I must repeat my question: What sort of proof does he consider necessary in any matter of ancient history?

Comrade Morton says he is not attacking Christianity. He comes near enough to it. As long as Jesus Christ's test for religious doctrines, "By their fruits you shall know them," is generally accepted by the common sense of men, so long the charge that a religion bears bad fruit will be practically equivalent to the charge that it is unsound. Comrade Morton seems to claim that to interfere with another's belief regarding religion, even by words, is condemnable impertinence. I think his practice is better than his preaching. By constantly propagating his own views, and giving no rest to those who hold the contrary, he is acting as a good man. That is, aside from the question whether Free Society's space is most profitably employed on this topic.

I can assure him that the revised version of the Bible is read in Sherburne when the pastor does the reading, and sometimes when others do. On my part I am glad to find in Morton an unbeliever who uses the revised. All the unbelievers with whom I have previously dealt have insisted on basing their arguments on the old version, to the great damage of their logical pertinence.

As to this miscellaneous talk about missionaries in China, I want to make three brief statements. First, the majority of newspaper reports on this subject are derived from men who hate missionaries as they hate Anarchists, and are no more willing to come to close quarters with missionary work than with Anarchist agitation; consequently they lie about missionaries as they lie about Anarchists. Second, the sensational facts which may be true of a missionary need not be true of missionaries in general. Third, the extraordinary political authority exercised by missionaries, which occasioned (I do not say caused) the first Boxer riots, was exclusively a matter of Catholic missionaries, in which no Protestants were concerned.

As to C. L. James' long and learned-looking article on missionaries, it cuts a sorry figure when confronted with his professed authority, Williams' "Middle Kingdom." He says repeatedly "I shall cite no one but Williams," and contrives to give the impression that his statements about Chinese matters are all from this source; but he makes important assertions which have not so much as their germ in Williams. He also expressly cites Williams as the authority for certain particular statements (not important ones) which are not in Williams in any form. He twice denies rather important facts by saying that they are "unstated," "I have looked carefully through Williams' work and could not find," when Williams does expressly state the facts in question. He often amusingly misunderstands Williams' account—most conspicuously where he confuses the Triad Society with the Taoists; most pestilently where he alleges that the early Protestant missionaries to China were all in the employ of the opium trade. And throughout his article, he follows the policy of making a man or a movement appear praiseworthy or despicable, by printing a selection of creditable facts, and suppressing all the discreditable, or vice versa.

Specifications for these and other charges against the trustworthiness of Comrade James' bit of historical composition are forthcoming on demand. The whole mess is the more lamentable, since the latter part, if cleared of misrepresentations, would furnish excellent material for illustrating Wilfrid Scawen Blunt's words:

> "Crimes find accomplices, and Murder weapons.
> The ways of Statesmen are an easy road.
> All swords are theirs, the noblest with the neediest.
> And those who serve them best are men of good."

Sherburne, Vt. STEVEN T. BYINGTON.

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

Politics imply a change of masters; liberty implies the repudiation of all masters.

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CHORDS.

Sweet Charity was one day passing down the street, dressed in the height of fashion, and showing in every line of her figure and in every feature of her countenance evidences of taste and refinement, when she came upon Industry lying beastly drunk in the gutter, just able to drag himself up on his elbow and curse a well-dressed gentleman by the name of Capital, who was passing in a stylish carriage. Sweet Charity and Capital exchanged greetings, agreed that Industry was in a shocking state of demoralization, tossed him a dime to sober up on, and then congratulated one another that their names had been changed by act of legislature, so that nobody would ever suspect them of being daughter and son of that loathsome wretch, or that everything they had in the world they received from him.—The Straight Edge.

A specimen of the average morality of politicians is Assemblyman Martin Canavan, one of the judges at the primary election in San Rafael, who is charged with permitting "saloon touts and other notorious characters to vote the names of respectable citizens known to be opposed to the machine slate." Seventeen such citizens have made affidavit thereto. Mr. Canavan is reported as replying, when his attention was called to the circumstances, that "if they keep away from the polls, they ought to have their names voted."—San Francisco Star.

Li Hung Chang says the Chinese are too wise to send out missionaries. What a pity. Otherwise there might be some hope of reclaiming the heathen in various benighted regions of the United States.—Justice.

The attempts of President McKinley to suppress the pernicious activity of federal officeholders remind us of the strenuous effort of the average man who has picked up a $20 bill in the street to discover the owner.—Richmond (Va.) News.

The kind of expansion the workers want is an expansion of their stomachs and wardrobes instead of the capitalist's purse.—The Toiler.

If soldiers do not cease participating in midnight riots, burglaries, etc., in this city, some newspaper or other, in a moment of desperation, is likely to stop referring to them as "heroes." This matter of having a "hero" appear in the role of a plugugly at any time is becoming monotonous.—San Francisco Examiner.

If a weak people have anything we need, we can soon decide that our flag has been insulted.—The New Light.

The dark blots on modern Christian civilization cover the entire field!—The Flaming Sword.

THOU ART INEXCUSABLE, O MAN.

The man who appeals from such a decision (the Supreme Court) to the murderous injustice of lynch law, is either an Anarchist or a fool; and an Anarchist is a fool.—The Star.

We are not surprised at being daily vilified by the capitalistic press; we expect, appreciate, and enjoy it; but when it comes from such an honest reformer as Editor Barry, we think it advisable to note his failure to understand the noblest principles yet thought out by man.

Shakespeare says "For policy I hate; I had as lief be a Brownist as a politician." William Dean Howells, more recently, said: "The only moment of sensible or positive political sovereignty for the workingman is that of voting, *but in that moment he parts with his sovereignty* for a term of months or years, without respect to the men who shall make his laws, judge them, execute them. . . He chooses [?], he elects [?], he gives, and 'the gods themselves cannot resume their gifts,' *much less a poor devil who has voted with his party and has nothing to eat.* . . . . . Until a man is independent, he is not free. As long as he must look to the pleasure or the profit of another man for his living, he is not independent. He may have the right to speak freely, print freely, pray freely, vote freely; but he cannot manfully use his right, though warranted in it by the Constitution and the statutes of all States, if he is afraid another man may take away his means of livelihood for doing so. . . The man who is in danger of want, *or even in dread of want, is not a free man;* and the country which does not guard him against this danger and this dread, or does not assure him the means of livelihood, is not a free country, though it may be the freest of all 'free countries'"

And no government will ever do this.

The foregoing is a good quotation to lay before the people during the term of America's intense madness, repeated every four years, when the universal theme is voting for other men to govern them; but even then

The fulness of most men's thoughts is, emptiness of his own purse; for the constant weight on men's minds is the chronic lightness of their purse.

This will continue, if men continue to vote for other men to govern them—it does not make the difference of a damson—well, to be exact, sixty two damsons, who rules, Socialist, Democrat, or Republican, all are good men when they attend to their own business; but power will spoil any man, even honest Bryan, who dislikes Socialists, and who is going to smash trusts—going dead against evolution, which has produced trusts, to show Labor in a most unmistakable manner that all man-made laws of value must be replaced by the natural standard of value—Labor.

No man is good enough to govern another man, no man understands another man, no man understands himself six hours in advance.

Fra Elbertus (Elbert Hubbard) says: "I am an Anarchist. All good men are Anarchists. All cultured, kindly men; all gentle men; all just men are Anarchists; Jesus was an Anarchist."

Now, friend Barry, will you undertake to say that Shakespeare, Howells, Hubbard, Tolstoi, Kropotkin, Jesus, and all such, are not cultured, kindly, gentle and just men? And furthermore, is "fool" a correct term to apply to them?

KINGHORN-JONES.

The Letter-Box.

H. L. H., So Middleton, Mass.—We have no single copies of any of last year's issues for sale. We keep a limited number of volumes of each past year, the price of which is 75 cents a volume.

H. N. K., Champion City, Ill.—Just so. Socialism has gone to seed; and Anarchy is the seed, in which is the life principles. History shows myriads of cases where the people have been betrayed by those whom they have confidingly raised to power; but it does not show one instance of liberty being acquired by men, who set out by denying it. Anarchy means Socialism in its best and truest sense; but the political and authoritarian Socialism of today spells power every time, and is the very antithesis of the liberty for which we contend.

E. A. T., New Whatcom, Wash.—Your article is very good, and will appear soon. But next time, please paragraph, punctuate, and use quotation marks where they belong. It greatly lightens the burdens of the editor, when correspondents are more careful in these matters.

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